

Newsletter

St Thomas Medical Group



Practice Update

Written by Chris Stoppard - Practice Manager

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We're all very happy to see the sunshine here in Exeter. However, we know that some of you may be preparing to travel further afield. If you're leaving the country for your holidays, please remember to allow plenty of time for requesting your repeat prescriptions, make sure you take adequate sun protection and keep up to date with the Covid regulations of any country you may be visiting or passing through.

Our new telephone system is proving to be a success and we have received positive feedback on the changes. We have also seen an increase in our on line consultations which is great news. If you've not used it yet, we would encourage you to try it. The on line forms can be accessed on our home page. They are user friendly and very easy to navigate.

We have had a lot of staff sickness over recent months and we have tried our best to limit the impact this has had on you. We thank you for your patience and understanding as we head towards healthier times.

Covid and Flu Vaccines

We may be basking in the summer sunshine right now but it's already time to start thinking about protecting ourselves for the winter. We will shortly be contacting all eligible patients and inviting them for their Covid and Flu vaccinations.

Please only contact us when you receive the relevant communications, we will be unable to book vaccination appointments until the invites have been sent.

Shingles and Pneumonia Vaccines

At this time of year we also start planning to offer shingles and pneumonia vaccinations. We send invites for pneumonia vaccinations to eligible patients who will be 65 or over by 31st March 2023. We send invites for shingles vaccinations to eligible patients aged 70 to 80 years of age.

Most people will only require one dose of each vaccine. However, occasionally some people will need a second shingles dose. Your nurse will discuss this with you during your appointment.

For further information please click on the links below.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/pneumococcal-vaccination/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/shingles-vaccination/>

Childhood Immunisations

Routine childhood immunisations are important for the health and well-being of your child. We offer vaccinations for common childhood illnesses that can cause serious, and even life-threatening complications. Children are offered vaccinations as babies, pre-schoolers and as teenagers. All of which are vital in ensuring that our own children stay well, but also in continuing to protect us all by making it harder for these diseases to spread. For more information, please contact the surgery, or visit the website below:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them/>

"Please remember you can self refer to Talkworks, if you are struggling with your mental health."

"If you're looking for a dentist, you can find a list of NHS dentists here. You may find that you need to join a waiting list to be seen, as NHS dentists are very busy dealing with backlogs caused by Coronavirus.
<https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-dentist>"

Smear Tests

All women and people with a cervix will be invited for smear tests at regular intervals between the ages of 25 and 64. Smear tests detect signs of human papillomavirus; a virus that, if left un-detected, could cause cervical cancer. Our nurses are highly trained and very considerate so you can book an appointment confident in the knowledge that you will be well cared for.

For further information on smear tests and cervical cancer please visit the following websites:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/cervical-screening/>

<https://www.jostrust.org.uk/>

COVID-19 Travel Passes

Many countries now require proof of Covid vaccination from all overseas visitors. You can get your vaccination travel pass in various formats including a letter through the post, an email and via the NHS app. The passes are not available through your GP, they must be requested through the NHS website (link provided below) or by phoning 119.

We strongly recommend that you take a print out of your Covid travel pass to the airport, to avoid any wifi access issues on arrival.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/nhs-covid-pass/get-an-nhs-covid-pass/>

Sun Safety

We will be enjoying the sunshine as much as everyone else but we always remember to use sun safety. Please keep the following advice in mind during the summer:

- Stay out of the sun between 11am and 3pm
- Use at least factor 30 sunscreen
- Wear Sunglasses
- Make sure you don't burn
- Drink plenty of water
- Take extra care with young children

For more advice and sun safety tips, click on the links below

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/sunscreen-and-sun-safety/>

<https://www.britishskinfoundation.org.uk/how-to-stay-safe-in-the-sun>

"Please call 119 if you need to book a COVID19 vaccination or search GRABAJAB to find your local vaccination centre."

"Children aged 5-11 in the UK are to be offered vaccination against Coronavirus. It is likely that vaccination in these age groups will not be carried out in general practice. We will keep you informed about progress on this campaign when we receive further information."